

Mr. REID. Three hours and 15 minutes. Now it is about 3 ½ hours.

Mr. BYRD. And I am only on page 3 of page 4. Well, that is just a start. As John Paul Jones said, "We have just begun to fight."

I have in my pocket the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence. Once I finished page 4 tonight, I intended to start reading the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States to follow.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, I do not think he would have to read it, would he?

Mr. BYRD. I think reading it makes it better.

Mr. REID. Does not the Senator have that memorized anyway?

Mr. BYRD. I know something about the Constitution, but I will save that for another day. I have a number of poems which I would be glad to quote even though these old legs are getting tired. Shall I quote one?

Mr. REID. I personally would like to hear a poem.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I never was a show-off so I am not going to quote any poetry tonight. That would be showing off. I just wanted the Senator to know I could quote some poems. I can read the Constitution and comment on it as I go along. I can read the Declaration of Independence. I can read the Bible. I can read Milton's "Paradise Lost." I could read Carlyle's "History of the French Revolution." I could even read Daniel Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe." Just because my legs are hurting and I am growing quite frail and my voice is a little weak, I am not quite ready to say, well, they have the votes and let us quit.

I thank the distinguished Democratic whip. The Senator knows I am getting tired, which is the reason I am not saying things just right.

Let me see if there is anything else for which I need consent. I believe not, but it is my understanding that I will be recognized when the Senate next returns to the homeland security legislation. I thank the Chair and I thank the whip.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I do not think a good steward would want to leave his job unfinished quite so abruptly. I do have a half page of my prepared remarks to read. I do not like to put items in the RECORD, so, if I may, I ask unanimous consent that again this not be counted as a second speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. By requiring Senate confirmation of this new Director of the National Office for Combating Terrorism, Congress will ensure that its concerns over the implementation of homeland security strategy will not be subordinated to the political agenda of the White House.

Remember, we are not just talking about a Director of Homeland Security under the Bush administration. We are not just talking about a Director of Homeland Security under a Republican administration. There can very well come a time there will be a Director of Homeland Security under a Democratic administration, and I hope the Senators will see the wisdom in looking forward to a time when the worm will turn, the wheel will turn, and there will be a Democrat in the White House.

I am thinking of Senate confirmation as something that will be important under a Democratic administration as well as under a Republican administration, as important to the people of this country under a Democratic President as under a Republican President, under Mr. Bush. For the moment, it is a Republican President. A thousand years is but a day in God's reach. And there will probably be a Department of Homeland Security after my life on this globe has run its span.

The war against terrorism may not end soon. It may go on and on. Who knows? The President himself has said it will not be quick, it will not be easy, and it will not be short. Therefore, it is not difficult to imagine that there will come a day when there will be a Democratic President in the White House, and I say that my Republicans friends, when that time comes, will be glad if we in our day have required the Director of Homeland Security to be confirmed by the Senate.

So we are not legislating for a day, a week, or the remaining 2 years of this Republican administration. We are debating and acting for a long time.

Once this is on the statute books, it is not easy to change it because a President can veto a change. If Congress sees the unwisdom of its ways today and seeks to change the statute books, maybe a President in the White House would veto that bill if it came to his desk. So its easier, in a way, to make a law than it is to change a law, in some instances. We had better do it right the first time, rather than just do it fast. Do it right. That is what I am seeking to do.

Even when the President's advisers want to conceal the agency mismanagement or shift public focus toward a war with Iraq, Congress can make sure that the Director's job is getting done because Congress can ask him directly. So I tell my colleagues that I understand their desire to style the statutory office by yielding to the urge that I know some Members do.

Let's do it right. There may be a different administration, maybe a different party at the White House, Mr. Bush may not be at the White House at

that time, I may not be at my desk. Let's do it right. Let's do it the way we ought to do it. If the war on terror is to be with us a long time, a Director of Homeland Security will be with us a long time, and Tom Ridge, if he is to be the Director in the future, even he may be gone and another Director may stand in his stead. Think about that. It is more than just a thought in passing.

I thank my friend from Nevada. I thank all Senators. I thank the wonderful people who have to man the desks up there. I thank the Presiding Officer, I thank the pages, the security personnel, the Doorkeepers and all. They have had to wait and listen. They are doing their job. I thank them and I apologize to them, in a way. I apologize for having delayed them to their places of abode.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, my statement has to undergo some interruption because of the colloquy between Mr. REID and myself. But the little remainder that I just read just now, I hope it will be understood from those who read the RECORD, that was the closing part of a previously prepared speech, and I hope they will keep that in mind when they read all parts of it in the RECORD. I would not ask it be joined directly with the first part, because of that colloquy.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allow to speak for a period not to exceed 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I firmly believe that the issue of Iraq is not about politics. It's about national security. We know that for at least 20 years, Saddam Hussein has aggressively and obsessively sought weapons of mass destruction through every means available. We